

Note

1 Samuel – Part 1 and 2

Era	Characters	Chapters
In the beginning	God created the world.	Genesis 1
Before 4000 BC	Adam & Eve	Gen 1~5
Before 3000 BC	Cain Abel Seth	Gen 4~5
Before 2500 BC	Noah	Gen 5~10
About 2000 BC Era of Patriarchs	Abraham Isaac & Ishmael Jacob & Esau Joseph	Gen 11~50
Before 1000 BC Era of prophets	Moses Aaron Joshua	Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy
	Joshua	Joshua
	Judges(Othniel Ehud Shamgar Deborah Gideon Tola Jair Jephthah Ibzan Elon Abdon Samson) Abimelech	Judges
	Ruth Boaz Naomi	Ruth
	Eli Samuel Saul David Jonathan	1st Samuel
About 1000 BC Era of princes	Saul Jonathan David	1st Samuel

Summary

1 Samuel - Part 1 of 2.....3

1 Samuel introduces the era of the kings. But ultimately reinforces the most important truth; God is the absolute power and sovereign. Hannah's song captures the essence of the book of Samuel:

- i) God raises the humble and opposes the proud
- ii) God will bless and anoint the King

Key points

- Judges concludes with the people lamenting the continuous cycle of misery and chaos.
- Israel wants a king to rule over them and end this cycle.
- Human leaders will always fail because of two fundamental truths:
 - 1) relationship with God is not transferable to your offspring – as witnessed in the stories of Eli and Samuel and their wayward sons.
 - 2) power corrupts man- as illustrated in the lives of Saul and David

God never fails. The Ark of God was returned to Israel by the Philistines solely as a testament of God's power.

1 Samuel - Part 2 of 2.....16

The second part of 1 Samuel essentially reveals the character of God:

- i) grants you free will
- ii) holds you accountable for your rebellious choices
- iii) is merciful to grant forgiveness when there is sincere repentance

Key points

- Israel rejects God in favour of a human leader
- God grants their demand but warns of its consequences
- Saul is anointed 1st King of Israel, but strays and disobeys God and repents not of his actions. The Holy Spirit departs from Saul
- David is anointed 2nd King of Israel. He breaks God's commandments when he commits adultery and murder

- But unlike Saul, David repents and confesses his sin when he is confronted. And God forgives him

A distinction is made in the gift of the Holy Spirit – in the Old Testament, Holy Spirit resides in the anointed temporarily. In the New Testament, through the finished work of Jesus the King, the Holy Spirit indwells in a believer

Transcript

1 Samuel – Part 1 of 2

Today, we will look at the Book of 1 Samuel. Actually, 1 and 2 Samuel were just one book, but due to its length, it was divided into two books in the English Bible. Though it is called 1 and 2 Samuel, it is quite obvious that Samuel could not have been the author of this entire book, 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, simply because Samuel died in 1 Samuel chapter 25, so obviously he couldn't write the end part of 1 Samuel nor the whole of 2 Samuel because he was already dead. So, the author is probably Samuel in the beginning and it could be other writers like, Gad and Nathan, adding on later to what Samuel had written.

Why is it called the book of Samuel when he couldn't have written the whole book? The reason is Samuel was the prophet used to anoint the first two kings of Israel: Saul and David. And this book is about the first two kings of Israel and, basically, introduces the new Era of the Kings.

I hope you remember what we said, we divide the Old Testament, quite conveniently, into four quadrants, so to speak:

1. 2000 BC, Age of Patriarchs.
2. 1500 BC, Age of Prophets.
3. 1000 BC, Age of the Princes (Kings). This is the era we're talking about now.
4. 500 BC , the era of the Priests.

So, we are moving on from the Era of the Prophets into the Era of the Kings. After this, the Book of Kings, the Book of Chronicles - these are about the Kings of Israel.

What we see here in this book is about the beginning of the kings, and it leads up to the King of the Jews – Jesus, in the New Testament.

In the age that we live in now, the King of the Church is Jesus.

And then, in the age to come, the King of the Universe is Jesus.

All these kings lead up to King Jesus, the son of David. He's always often called Son of Man, son of David.

So, we see here, the new age we are entering into. This follows, basically, from the Book of Judges. If you remember correctly, we taught you that the book previous to this is actually, Judges, because Ruth was actually a part of Judges in the English Bible; Ruth is interspersed inside between Judges and Samuel. Actually, it's connected: Judges then Samuel, the Era of the Kings. The Book of Judges ends with this, 'In those days, there was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes'. So they were thinking, "Because we have no king, that's why there is chaos". In the Book of Judges, it was endless chaos, cycle after cycle of misery and chaos. Judges ends and there was no king. So now, they are looking for a king. They want to have a king, so they won't have to go through those awful cycles in Judges.

Before we move on into the study of Samuel, let's look at the Book of Judges and do a very quick review.

Remember, while we are studying this Book, called the Bible, our focus is not to see ourselves in it. That's a good thing to see.

Most people tend to study the Bible with "me" as focus.

What is this book for me?

What can I get out of this book?

What blessings will bless me?

What book do I like?

What is my favourite text?

It's always back to me.

In this Beautiful Book series, we are going to put our focus on God. This is going to be a huge challenge because when everybody studies, for example, Judges, they remember Samson the hero, they remember the characters, but somehow they don't see God in it. In Judges, most people do character studies of all these people like Deborah and Gideon, but God is really not there. So, in the Beautiful Book series, the whole purpose of the Beautiful Book is to see the beautiful God who wrote this masterpiece.

Who is this amazing God?!

So, let's look back at Judges. What did you learn about God in Judges? Not what did you learn about Samson or Delilah or whoever. About God. What is your takeaway from Judges about God? Not what did I see myself in the book of Judges, that's secondary.

What I take away from the book of Judges is - the Patience of God. Cycle after cycle - sin, turning away from God then an oppressor comes, some nation comes and conquers them, then they say, "Sorry God, sorry God!" I don't know whether they're really sorry or not really sorry, we are not even sure. When they say sorry to God after doing so many horrible things they did against God, year after year, then God sends them a deliverer, a judge, who delivers them. Then they have some peace. And very quickly, they forget God. Seven cycles like that. Seven always speaks of God, the perfect patience of God. 200 years. "Same old nonsense," we say. Sometimes people come to me and say, "Pastor, should I forgive this guy? He said sorry twice already but he still does the same thing to me. Should I forgive him?" Well, you look at God; 200 years but every time they say "Sorry", God in mercy comes and delivers them.

That's the focus of this book. What are we going to take away from 1st Samuel after this? Let's now look at 1 Samuel.

So, the people want a king, they're looking for a leader.

I want you to study that human leaders will fail us.

They are looking for a leader. Everybody in every country is still looking for a leader, a political leader, that will save them from pandemics or economic problems or corruption or whatever. Every election, they look for a leader, and their hope goes up and then comes down. The approval rating of every leader goes up, and then after a few years, plateaus, and then collapses, and then they look for a new leader.

This is exactly what we're going to see in 1 Samuel. There are, actually, four people in this book. It begins with Eli, the High Priest. Obviously, he started well, he's a godly man, and then he fell so horribly that God just killed him and his sons. His sons were so horrible; they had sex in the temple with women who came to worship God. Sounds quite familiar, a lot of pastors take advantage of women. Priests take advantage of their people that come in and make confessions. Every religion has these people who use religion to take advantage, for sexual gain.

And the sons of Eli also enjoyed the power and the privilege, the perks that came with it. They ate the best food. Whatever they wanted, they just took from the offerings, as if the offerings to God was their personal offerings. Don't we see this so commonly today? Pastors look at the church offering as if it is part of their personal budget, so to speak. They use it for their wife or to buy fancy houses, aeroplanes and whatever; nothing new. People love religion because you get power in religion, you get prestige in religion, you get possessions in religion. So, Eli started well but went down, and God killed him.

Samuel, wonderful. One of the greatest prophets in Israel. Started well, and then his sons, we're told, took bribes. His sons turned out so rotten and he didn't do anything about it. It's so common. You find pastors whose sons are horrible and they do nothing about it, nothing.

And God told Eli, "You honour your sons more than God", so he killed Eli.

Samuel, his two sons were just rotten.

Saul, the third character, started well. He was a hero, he was brave. He led Israel to victory. He was quite humble in the beginning and then, what an ending. He ends up going to a medium, a witch. And then, he ends up with suicide and dies and his sons all died. What an ending.

And then, the fourth character is David and David starts so well. Ends up: adultery with Bathsheba, kills the husband, lies, does everything. And then, his own sons turn against him and rebel....it's awful.

So, you see here, this cycle, four characters; Eli, Samuel, Saul and David. All of them fall. When they go up, it looks good. When they reach the top, there are all the temptations of power. David could take advantage of Bathsheba so easily, he was the king. And so, the danger of having power in a sinful human heart like ours, is very scary. It's much easier handling poverty than power. Handling power is very, very difficult.

So, we have the fall. They were looking for leaders, but human leaders - no hope. That's why in the end, you need a different type of leader called King Jesus, who will not fail you.

So, this book is divided, roughly, into three major sections:

1) Introduction, chapters 1 to 7.

Basically, it's about Hannah and her song about their desire for a king. So, chapters 1 to 7 is the intro.

2) Chapters 8 to 15 - The Rise of Saul, as King.

Everything turns up well, and then...

3) Chapters 16 to 31, The Fall of Saul.

So, three sections: The Intro, The Rise of Saul.

Chapters 16 to 31, as Saul is coming down, in the same chapters, David is coming up.

And in 2nd Samuel, you find David coming down. So, you see that graph! So, we see here, this structure of 1 Samuel.

Chapters 1 and 2 is about Eli, as the High Priest. And then, a lady called Hannah, with no kids. And God blesses her with a kid, after she goes to the temple to get a blessing.

So, Hannah does a song.

In the Bible, you have women like Deborah doing a song, Miriam doing a song, Hannah. I don't know why the women are the ones who come up

with that. I guess, songs are about emotions and thanksgiving and women are more emotional, right?

Hannah's song has, actually, the summary of this book. Look at chapter 2 - Hannah's song is about two themes, just two major themes:

One, God raises up the humble and brings down the proud.

That's theme number one in Hannah's song.

And theme number two is, that God will bless the King,

God will anoint the King.

And you see, truly, when Saul was humble, he was exalted. When he was proud, he was brought down. So with David, when he was humble, he was exalted. When he was proud, he came down. Samuel, the same.

Theme number one is, God blesses the humble and opposes the proud. So, be careful of pride. It's hard not to be proud, when you are high. That's why it's dangerous to be a ruler, to be in a position of power for too long. And if you are placed in a position of power, try not to have the trappings of power, like title and big car and big house, because that gives you a sense of pride. And then, the fall comes with the pride.

The second theme of Hannah's song is that, God will bless the king.

So, it says that in her song, "God would bless the king, He would give strength to the king, and He will anoint the king".

And later we see how God gave strength to Saul when He made him king, He anointed him and he had the Holy Spirit's power. And then, after that, when he was no more king, the strength was taken away from him. He became crazy after that, literally became paranoid, depressed.

And then, when David was made king, he had the Holy Spirit on him.

So, the theme is when God makes a leader, He gives, not just a title, He gives something so precious called 'anointing'. And that's why, in the Old Testament, it's always using oil on the man's head - oil, they put oil on every king and priest - because that's anointing; it's a picture of the Holy Spirit coming down and filling you.

So, that's the theme of Hannah's song. And if you read chapter 2, the rest of the book is basically, around this theme.

Then in chapter 2, the sins of Eli's sons are seen. And then in chapter 8 the sins of Samuel's sons are seen. So, be very careful. When we are spiritual, don't assume that our children will automatically be spiritual. There's this tendency among pastors to pass on "the pastorate" to their children. I don't see it in the New Testament. And in the Old Testament, when I see it, it generally is not a very good outcome. Because grace doesn't go from generation to generation. It is whosoever believes in Him. The anointing is not generational. If you become king, you get anointed. Your son is not anointed, until he gets anointed. So, it's not generational. Be careful, don't assume that our children will have the same spiritual blessings, spiritual power as us. In every other thing like companies, kingdoms, it tends to be generational, but not in God's kingdom.

Let's see a few chapters in this introduction part. Chapter 4 is about the Ark. When the Israelites were faced against the enemy, the Philistines, do you know what they did? They panicked. They asked for the Ark of God to be taken out, as they thought the only way to beat the Philistines is to bring this magic box, so to speak. The Ark of God was the symbol of God's presence among His people. And they used it as a "magic" symbol, thinking, "It's going to work". Of course, it didn't.

God doesn't have any magic symbols. In every other religion, there are magic symbols. And so, in "folk" Christianity or false Christianity, we do have, 'when the devil comes, take out the Bible, "Oh, this is a symbol that

the devil will run away”, or you, take out the Cross and the devil will run away’. No, it doesn't work that way. There are no magic symbols.

The power is in the the Holy Spirit who lives in us. There are still a lot of religions and even Christianity, that likes to use symbols, as if they were magic and there was power in it.

So they brought the Ark out against the Philistines. You keep hearing the word Philistines. Who are the Philistines? There is a modern nation that sounds a bit similar, in that part of the world, Palestine = Philistine. Palestinians are, probably, some kind of descendant of the Philistines.

The other nation you will see, in this book, are the Ammonites. The Ammonites are from, what today is the place called, Aman. Aman is the capital of the Kingdom of Jordan today. These are still there. These are tribes that are still there. So, when they fought against the Philistines with the Ark, thinking that, “Oh, the magic symbol has come, we will conquer”. They didn't. In fact, the Israelite army was routed. And Eli's two sons were killed. And then Eli, when he heard the news, the fat guy flipped over his chair and he also died, the fat, obese priest.

When the Ark was brought to the Philistine territory, they took it as a victory. They got the Ark! They put it in the temple of their god, Dagon. And then, Dagon fell down before the Ark. And then, disease and death came to the Philistines. The city was so scared, “We don't want this thing”. So, they moved it to another city. Disease and death followed, disease and death followed. So actually, God got the victory, in His own way, by bringing disease and death.

We always think the heroes in the Bible are Jonathan, and David, and Saul. These are the people who are the heroes. In Sunday School, stories are always about people, character studies, very seldom about God. And then, children remember the story: David, the hero, Gideon the

hero, stuff like that. Actually, who was the real hero? Who killed the Philistines in this? Death and disease? Who brought the death and disease?

God!

In fact, the Philistines were not sure, “Is this really a coincidence? Is this just a pandemic?” So, they tested it and they found it is God. You can read the story; I don’t want to go into the details of the story. The purpose of this Beautiful Book series is not going into little details.

The Ark brought death to the Philistines in untold numbers. Finally, the Philistines decided to return this Ark to the Israelites. So, the Israelites took it back.

And then, when they brought it back to a certain place, all the Israelite came and peeked into the Ark. It's like, “This magic box, let's see what this curious box is about, that caused so much death and disease and panicked the Philistines”. They looked into the box. And in chapter 6, it says: 50,700 Israelites died when they peeked into the box. They looked into the box, which no Jew was supposed to see. In fact, nobody is supposed to go anywhere near the box, except the High Priest. What is the message of this?

This is very seldom taught in Sunday Schools, - “You mean, our God kills 50,700 of His own people?! Better don’t teach that in Sunday school, that’s not nice!”

You see, the trouble of studying the Bible in bits and pieces is, you choose the nice parts. You choose the parts that are pleasing to teach, you choose verses that you like. You choose a devotional book that you like, because they choose verses that you like, right?

It's like, your father gives you advice. He gives you a lot of advice, some very strict, some very good and you ignore all this stuff that’s strict and

say, "Papa will give me money", You did say you'll give me money." But, you didn't say the part that Papa said 'do this before I give you. If you don't do this, this is what you get'.

So, for many Christians today, they love devotional books, because they choose the book they like. The devotional writer chooses the devotional verses he likes. And those that will sell! Right?

But when you have to do the whole study of the Bible, you get these awful parts. "You mean, He kills the Philistines? He also kills the Israelites, just for looking into the box?! My goodness, 50,000 people died! Even in COVID, there's not 50,000 deaths in the world (at the time of this message).

But in one town, 50,000 people died because they looked into the box. Why?

That's the Holiness of God. God said, clearly, "Nobody can touch this box", and they disobeyed. So, we see here, the Holiness of God. Don't take the things of God lightly, "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for He will not hold you guiltless..." Exodus 20:7

Today, I hear preachers preaching in the name of God, saying, "God will do this. God told me this, God said this, I got this dream last night" Be careful, don't use that box for curiosity. Don't use God's name for publicity. I fear for them. 50,000 died, just out of curiosity. What about people who use God's name for self-glory? The only difference is you don't see the punishment here. You see the Israelites and you see the punishment. In the Old Testament, punishment is very physical: famine, hunger, disease. Today, punishment is mostly in the next life, not here, not in the famine here.

So, when you read chapter 6 and see 50,700 people dying from just looking into the box, think hard: This is the same God.

Then we see, in chapter 7, the Philistines attacked again. And you know what God does? Chapter 7, no king, no leader, only Samuel. Samuel prays to God, gives a burnt offering and God sends thunder in such a way that it panicked the Philistines and they probably trembled and shook and the Israelites won the war.

I want you to notice that, in almost all the victories of men, including the popular ones like Jonathan going up to the rock, you'd say, "Jonathan, the hero!" Actually, if you read carefully, Jonathan was not the hero, because when he went up there, God caused an earthquake. And then, they won.

And David and Goliath, you think David's the hero? No. It was God. To take one little pebble? Goliath with shield, with head shield, but David slung it exactly there, right into his head, ballistic power from God. "The battle", David said, "is the Lord's". Is David the hero? Sunday School says, "Yes, David's the hero". No. To me, God is the hero of this story. God is the hero of every book in the Bible. But when you do character studies, men become the hero.

So, I hope here we see, just in the introduction, some useful lessons. But the most powerful is that God is our hero.

Transcript

1 Samuel – Part 2 of 2

We now come to the second part of 1 Samuel!

Remember, chapters 8 to 15 speaks of the rise of Saul as the King.

Chapter 8 says, 'Samuel was old and he wanted to offer his sons to lead Israel. But Israel rejected his sons. They said, "Your sons are not like you." The Bible says, 'they take bribes, for judgement'. People went to them, they were, like, judges.

In fact, Samuel was the last judge of Israel. Every time there was a dispute, they went to him. He was liked, a respected person.

His sons took bribes. As we said, "Power and prestige corrupts. Absolute power corrupts. Absolutely." And religious leaders have a lot of power, almost, absolute power over their followers, in many cults.

So, the people said, "No, no, we don't want your sons. Give us a king, like the other nations, who can fight our wars." Now that was about the most ridiculous request you can ever hear. Because God was their King.

He had fought their wars for the last few hundred years. Every time there was a fight, they won. They went to the city, the most fortified cities. Joshua and his "basic" troops, who never knew anything about fighting, with the most rudimentary weapons - sometimes just a ram's horn, 'hoooot, hoooot, hoooot' - and the city walls come down. Who had been fighting for them all this time? They conquered 31 cities, fortified cities. Who was fighting for them? God.

But God was not visible to them. Just like for many Christians who read the entire Old Testament, and don't see God in it clearly, at all. They see human heroes.

So, the children of Israel said, "Give us a king, like other nations." Basically, they never saw their King. "Give us a king to fight our wars." They never saw their King who fought their wars. What's new? Christians don't see the God who fights the wars of the Israelites in the Old Testament, who protects us daily, who blesses us daily; they don't see it.

They want to see miracles, go to church and see miracles. Every day when I wake up is like a miracle. So many blessings we have, we don't even know.

So, they want a king, like the other nations, to fight their wars? Okay. God grants them their request. God said, to Samuel, "No, they didn't reject you." Samuel was angry, and asked them "Why do you want a king?" So, he asks God, "Should I give them a king?" God said, "Why are you angry? They didn't reject you; they reject Me!"

When you read the Bible and you don't see God, you reject God in the Bible.

So, God grants them their request. Be careful. You know you should have something, you ask for it and you know what happens? Watch the character of God here. He says, "Really, they really want it? I can sense they really want it, insist on it. Give them a king." In chapter 8 God says, "Give them a king." Samuel was asked to stand before them and tell them, "You want a king? This is what will happen. All the problems in having a king - your children will be drafted into the army, 10% of all your money will be taken by the king, your daughters will be taken by the king to serve in his household, etc, etc."

And then, in chapter 12 verse 17, it says, 'after the warning, thunder and heavy rain came to show the anger of God'. He gave it to them, but he showed the anger of God.

I hope you understand the character of God. He allows us. He doesn't stop us. He doesn't force us to do anything. If you keep insisting, He will allow. But you will bear the consequences.

They want a king, an impressive king, like the other nations. So, He gave them the most impressive you could find, a guy who was head and shoulders above any other man in Israel. Height is always impressive, to the superficial human mind. It's said, in the US elections, that every time there are two presidential candidates, the taller one wins. I don't know how correct that is but I'm told that it's true. He may not be smarter, but he's taller. And so, "You want a king like the other nations? I'll give you one." So, you see, in politics, the impressive guy, the one who can speak, who sounds impressive, dominant, wins. So, they got one, exactly as they dreamt. The tallest and the most impressive king of all the land.

Chapter 10 says, 'God gave them Saul. And, Saul started humble. And God gave Saul the Holy Spirit'. In the Old Testament, remember, the Holy Spirit comes to certain people only and temporarily, not indwelling. For us, it's the indwelling Holy Spirit. He indwells us.

How did they know that he was anointed? The Bible tells us, in 1 Samuel chapter 10, "he prophesied".[2]

What do you mean by prophesied? They talk about the future? I don't think so. It tells us, for example, 'the moment he was made king, he had the Holy Spirit. And then, he went out and he assembled the people and he told them, "All of you, I expect all of you to come, unite together and fight our enemy". And, you know what? The Bible says, 'and when he said that, the fear of God fell upon them'. 1 Samuel 11:6-7

What does that mean? He spoke with the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

You know your leader is anointed when he speaks. There is a tension, there is response. Not because he speaks bombastically with fancy words and rhetoric and everybody says, "Great speech, great speech!" and life doesn't change. That's not anointing, that's not the Holy Spirit. That's another spirit, that's a public speaking spirit.

So, again, with David. When David was made king, in 1 Samuel 16, it says, 'the Holy Spirit came upon David'. [3]

And when the Holy Spirit came on David, in 1 Samuel 16 [4], the Holy Spirit left Saul, that's how temporary it was. When God wanted him to be king, God allowed him to have the Holy Spirit, anointed him with the Holy Spirit. When he was going to be removed, God took away the Holy Spirit from him and he was powerless. He became, literally, a "madman", almost - mad with rage, mad with envy, mad with revenge. The spirit, or all the wrong spirits came into him, of anger, envy, etc.

Then in chapter 13, we see Saul blatantly disobeys God, offers a burnt offering.

Chapter 15, God tells Saul, "Destroy the Amalekites and I don't want any spared." He spared the king, he spared the best cattle. And when he was approached by Samuel who said, "What are you doing? I told you not to do this!" Each time, he didn't say sorry, he gave an excuse. And then, Samuel said, "You're done. The kingdom will be taken from you."

Now, what do we learn about the character of God here?

I learned very clearly that David, too, made mistakes. He made a horrendous mistake. He killed his best general, because he had adultery with his general's wife. He lied about this. But, you know what? The moment the Prophet went to him and said, "You are the man", he confessed his sins. And you know what? God forgave him.

So, what do we learn about God's character? Does God expect us to be perfect? No, we are sinners. That's not an excuse for us to keep sinning. But whenever we are convicted of our sin, God expects us to confess and to repent of our sin. And forgiveness is always available to those who go through the door of repentance and confession. So, the character God is not expecting perfection. He's expecting us to say, "Sorry, God." Not just say but be sorry.

So, let's just learn this character of God. God is not harsh. God has a door wide open for you – that door is called repentance. But Saul did not repent. His was excuses upon excuses, he blames other people, "They made me do it. I actually wanted, but, but, but..."

So, learn that about God: He is so merciful to those who ask forgiveness.

Chapter 15, "Bye-bye", to Saul. Saul is on the way down.

Chapter 16, David is anointed king. The Holy Spirit comes on him. The Holy Spirit leaves Saul, in chapter 16. Immediately, when the Holy Spirit is on David, the story moves on to the famous story of 'David and Goliath'. And we think, "David is a shepherd boy. He can sling like nobody's business". No, no, no. The story comes after the Holy Spirit's anointing. The Holy Spirit can anoint your words, He can anoint your pebbles. When He anoints your words, there's power in your word. When He anoints your pebbles, there's power in your pebbles. So, people see the pebble of David, they don't see the power of God.

Chapter 17 verse 47, this is the secret of David. He said, "The battle is the Lord's." The battle is the Lord's. Your battle is not your battle, it's the Lord's. He is called the Lord of Hosts, the Lord of armies, go to war with the Lord of Hosts.

So, after the killing of Goliath, by the power of God, the women sing a song, "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands." [6] And that began the next part of this book - the envy, the paranoia of Saul. Why was Saul such a good king in the beginning? An unction of the Holy Spirit upon him. The moment that Spirit was taken off, he was left to his own passions and desires.

And so, we see the rest of this book, almost, is not about anything nice to read. It's about the envy, the paranoia, and the greed, the passion of one man to kill another man, who is his competitor. That's all. I mean, I don't like to read from chapters 16 to 31, it's almost like, "I don't want to read this. This is so awful."

But, what is God teaching us?

When men of God have envy against another man, then, the battles become so ugly.

Today, in the Christian world, there are 14,000 dominations. The vast majority have been divided, not by doctrines - doctrines are the excuses for the division. They are divided by envy and jealousy of other people 'who are more successful than us'. "They have 10,000, we have 1,000. So, we have to say something bad about them, find one point about them that's not good and highlight that point and say how much we are better because we don't have that one point."

So, we see here, almost 15 to 16 chapters devoted to the envy of one person to another. He almost killed his own son because his son seemed to be siding with David. He killed a whole family of priests, an entire clan of priests except for one, because they seemed to have helped David. When you're so filled with envy and jealousy, you get blinded. Envy really is the bitterness of the soul. It eats you up.

Finally, he ends up visiting a medium and this is a very odd story, in chapter 28. He goes to this medium and says, "I want to get some word from God about the battle to come, but I hear nothing from God. Can you ask Samuel to come up from the dead? I need advice." And so, this 'witch' calls up Samuel.

I don't know whether this is really the real Samuel who came up or an imitation Samuel because evil spirits can mimic anybody. I don't know. My inclination is to think that God allowed this witch. Normally this is not allowed; witches cannot call the dead out. When a witch claims to call

somebody from the dead, it's either a fake, they pretend to see someone, or if it is true, it's an evil spirit. It's not a dead man. Dead men can't come out from the grave. So, this "whoever this one is" came out. Let's just say, God allowed this witch to let Samuel come out so that Samuel can warn Saul and say, "You're going to die, you're finished because you disobeyed God." Maybe it was the real Samuel? I don't know.

And then, the next day in battle, he's hurt and then he puts a spear and he kills himself. And his sons are all dead. That's the end of a life of promise. Power gone into his head. So, not a nice story, seeing leaders fall one by one.

Today, we see Christian leaders fall. Many, too many. Women and money, women and money, same thing.

And then, at the end of it all, we ask ourselves:
What is the character of God you want to learn?

What do you want to know about your God from 1 Samuel? For me, I want to know that often God allows me when I insist on something.

A lot of people, they insist, "they want to marry this guy, and they ask God; left, no they don't get an answer, they try right, they don't get an answer, they try upstairs and downstairs, finally they get what they want - See, see God allows!"

They don't realize that, if you keep insisting, "Go, go, go, if you insist. Go! Maybe that's the only way you can learn," God says. "You're so stubborn. I tried to tell you no, no. The Bible tells you no, no. Your pastor tells you, no, no. You want to go? Go! You have to learn the hard way."

So, the character of God is, He allows. Be careful, but you pay the consequence.

The lesson's cost is so high. So, let's learn some lessons about God in this and I hope that, at the end of it all, you know who your God is, who your Father is. He allows you, but He will still punish you for your rebellion. And you don't "think" its rebellion, because He allowed it.

So, may God bless you with understanding. May each lesson help you to know God better and, also, yourself better. And may you know that your God is a wonderful, wise Father, the wisest of all.

God bless you!